

3" Anti-Aircraft Gun

Written by David Boyd
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The 3" Anti-Aircraft Gun



The 3 inch Anti-Aircraft dates back to the First World War and was still in service at the beginning of the Second World War. While the 3.7" was superior in performance to the 3" anti-aircraft gun the 3.7" was not yet available in sufficient numbers and the 3" was much lighter which meant it had greater mobility, it also had a high rate of fire and a good transverse speed. Production of the guns had ceased in Britain well before the war but a number were still undergoing conversion and mobile platforms were still being built at the beginning of the war. It's interesting to note that some guns were still being built in India up until 1943.

3" Anti-Aircraft Gun Data

Weight	2,250 lb gun and breech
Total length	140"
Length of barrel	95"
Rifling	20 grooves, 1/30
Elevation	0-90 degrees
Traverse	0-90 degrees
Weight in action	6,000 lb
Rate of fire	20-25
Projectile weight	65 lb

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Muzzle velocity 2,600/2,500 fps
Max range 12,400/11,900 yards
Max height 23,500 feet

Armour Piercing ammunition

AP 5 11200
AP 20 88655

Production of 3" Anti-Aircraft guns by year (UK only)

PS 1700 1939
3" 4216 Conversions
4 wheel 384 platform
2 wheel 3 platform
HE 1,234,298
Shrapnel 30,000

Sources - British & American Artillery of WWII,
AVIA 22 456 - 514, WO 185/178